

Your  
Seattle  
Fire Department

**MEMORANDUM**



DATE: May 27, 2011

TO: City Councilmember Tim Burgess, Chair  
Public Safety and Education Committee

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FROM: Gregory M. Dean, Fire Chief

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SUBJECT: Fire Department presentation on 2011 RSJI Work Plan

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I look forward to sharing the Fire Department's Race and Social Justice Work Plan with your committee on June 1. Race and Social Justice Initiative Workplan Lead Travis Taylor and SFD Change Team leads, Firefighter Melissa Woolsey and Firefighter Brian Boulay, will be joining me for the presentation. I am encouraged that the City Council continues to make the RSJI a focus and priority. Working toward true racial equity in our City will require continued commitment.

Our presentation will highlight major RSJI activities since our last presentation in August of 2010 through the end of the year, followed by accomplishments, goals, and challenges in 2011.

During the last quarter of 2011, the Department's most noteworthy accomplishment in furtherance of the RSJI was the development and implementation of a Community Fire Safety Advocate (CFSA) Pilot project. This project was initially developed in response to the fatality fire occurring in the Fremont neighborhood on June 12, 2010, but had specific outcomes that were important goals of the initiative. The fire victims were first and second generation Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees, which tragically highlighted the need for more fire safety education in their communities. The goals of the program were to:

- Increase home fire safety and fire prevention practices among members of the East African community.
- Expand and improve outreach to East African communities by Seattle Fire Department members.
- Build relationships between the Seattle Fire Department and East African Community leaders.
- Increase the Fire Department understands of the needs and concerns of the East African community.
- Demonstrate to the East African community the services offered by the Seattle Fire Department

The CFSA program was extremely successful and resulted in the following outcomes:

- Five East African community members received capacity-building skills and knowledge in fire safety and prevention.

- Over 1,300 East African community members were reached with culturally relevant fire safety information.
- Community Fire Safety Advocates conducted 119 hours of outreach activity between September and December of 2010.
- Ongoing relationships were developed with the Department and nine community organizations service East African residents.

In looking to objectives and accomplishments for 2011, internal capacity building training and education, outreach to immigrant and refugee communities, and workforce equity continue to be high priorities in the Department's current work plan.

The attached spreadsheet describes our accomplishments, goals, and some challenges for 2011. Because of limited time, we won't be able to cover the entirety of the plan in detail, but will highlight achievements of which we are particularly proud in addition to major goals and challenges for the remainder of the year:

- The Department continues to build on the successes of the CFSA program, by adding 2 Somali speakers and 1 Amharic speaker to the 4 East African CSFAs that are continuing their outreach work from 2010. New CSFAs will be added from the Southeast Asian community.
- The requirement of Firefighter applicants to have an EMT certification is being reviewed by the Department's change team to determine whether it has a disproportionate impact on applicants of color. The Department is looking at the feasibility of removing this requirement and adding EMT certification to recruit school.
- The Department recognizes that the continued use of the RSJI Budget and Policy Filter Toolkit and the Racial Equity Toolkit in making policy, program and budget decisions is more important than ever in our current environment.
- The Department will be reviewing and analyzing any disproportionate impact on employees of color in the use of acting opportunities.
- Operations personnel attend meetings on an overtime basis because we are unable to hold meetings while all members are on shift, due to our four platoon shift schedule. Meetings held in furtherance of the RSJI have been scaled back this year due to budget cuts, because each meeting costs the Department overtime on average of \$1,200 per meeting.
- There are times when workplan goals involve areas in which the Department has little to no involvement or impact, such as with appointment of commissioners or advisory group members or with high potential community impact, such as Neighborhood Planning, Youth and Family Initiative, and the Family and Education Levy.
- To improve outreach and training internally to meet the objective of our WMBE contracting goals, the Department is implementing new one-on-one training to new purchasers and managers to increase usage.

I look forward to sharing our work and strategizing with the Committee about how we can collectively work for racial equity in the future.

Cc: SFD Change Team  
SOCR – Julie Nelson, Glenn Harris and Jacque Larrainzar